E – INFORMATION USAGE AMONG THE SCHOLARS OF SCIENCE IN PERIYAR UNIVERSITY: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY

E. S. KAVITHA

Assistant Professor, DLIS, Periyar University, Salem, Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

This paper tries to focus the use of E – Information by scholars of science in Periyar University, Salem. The study examined the types of information resources used by the research scholars, frequency of use, purpose of use of e- resources, research scholars' preference of sources, changes in the research work, level of satisfaction in e- resources and barriers faced by the research scholars while accessing the same.

KEYWORDS: E-Resources, Scholar of Science, E-Information, Periyar University

INTRODUCTION

The present era is E – Information era. It is growing every day; many online resources are available in the Library and Information Centers. The increase in information available on the internet. The library is the most widely used source of information available to literate societies. University libraries are interested in subscribing to e – resources considering their advantages over print media. E – Information can be accessible, at any place any time and space.

Electronic resources and services are becoming more integral parts of the collection more particularly in academic libraries. Research scholars are supposed to learn on a continuous basic, acquire new skill and competencies and pack new ideas to maintain a competitive edge. The academic community has undergone tremendous change during the past several years due to technology driven applications. The traditional pattern of information seeking is replaced with modern Information and Communication Technology based interactive searching and retrieval. In this scenario libraries need to justify their investments and provide the best resource for their users. This study examines the use pattern of electronic resources at large and its impact exclusively for researchers in the University of Periyar.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are

- To know the attitude and behavior of the scholars regarding their use of E – Information.

- To determine the frequency of use of E – Information resources among the research scholars of science of University of Periyar.

- To study the purpose of e – resources used by the research community.

- To measure the level of satisfaction of research scholars regarding the quality and quantity of information in e – resources.

- To study the problems faced by research scholars in accessing the information from the e – resources.

METHODOLOGY

The present investigation is a survey method using a questionnaire. For collecting primary data a questionnaire has been distributed among scholars of science directly following random sampling. The size of the sample chosen is one hundred and fifty. The responses received data from the research scholars are analyzed and presented in the form of tables and figures using a simple method of calculation.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table 1: Gender-Wise Distribution of Respondents

S. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	87	58
2	Female	63	42
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table 1 displays the Gender-Wise Distribution of Respondents. Among the 150 respondents, 58 per cent are male whereas 42 per cent of the respondents are female. Therefore the numbers of male respondents are more than the number of female respondents in scholar of science of Periyar University.

Table 2: Age-Wise Distribution of Respondents

S. No	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	20-25	61	40.66
2	26-30	42	28
3	31-35	25	16.66
4	35 and above	22	14.66
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table 2 describes the Age-Wise Distribution of Respondents. Among the respondents, 40.66 per cent of the respondents belong to the age category of 20-25. In this study, 28 per cent of the respondents belong to 26-30 age categories. This is followed by, 16.66 per cent of the respondents belong to 31-35 age category. 14.66 per cent belong to 35 and above age category. In this table, it is deduced that most of the respondents (40.66) belong to 20-25 age category use of E – Information.

Table 3: Frequency visit to the University central library

S. No	Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Every day	93	62
2	Once in a week	27	18
3	Once in a fortnight	13	8.6
4	Once in a month	12	8
5	Occasionally	5	3.3
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table 3 shows the frequency of visit to the University Central Library. In this study, 62 per cent of respondents are daily visitors, 18 per cent of respondents visit once in a week, 8.6 per cent of respondents visit once in a fortnight, 8 per cent of the respondents visit once in a month and 3.3 per cent of respondents visit occasionally. Hence more than half of the respondents visit the University Library every day.

Table 4: Level of Satisfaction in E- Resources

S. No	Option	No. of Respondents	Percent
1	Very Satisfied	76	50.6
2	Satisfied	57	38
3	Less Satisfied	14	9.3
4	Dissatisfied	3	2
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table 4 shows it is seen that 150 of respondents, more than half of the respondents 50.6 are very satisfied with the E – Information resources available in their Library.38 per cent are satisfied, 9.3 per cent are less satisfied and 2 per cent are dissatisfied respectively. Hence more than three fourth of the respondents are satisfied with the E – Information provided by the University.

Table 5: Purpose of Use of E – Information Resources

S. No	Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Developing Knowledge	27	18
2	Recreation	10	6.6
3	Communication	15	10
4	Research work	98	65.3
5	Entertainment Information	25	12.5
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table 5 shows that 18 per cent of the respondents seek E – Information for Developing Knowledge whereas 6.6 per cent of respondents seek information for recreation. This is followed by, 10 per cent of the respondents used communication whereas 65.3 per cent seek for research work.12.5 percent of the respondents used entertainment Information. Hence most of the scholars use the Research work for their Academic development.

Table 6: Types of E-Information Resources used by the Research Scholars

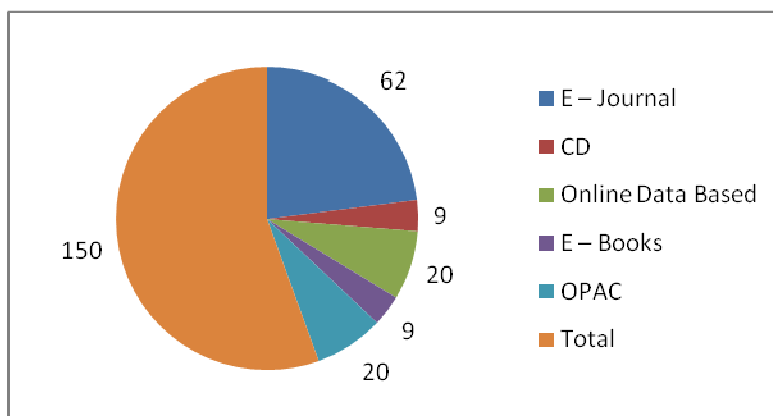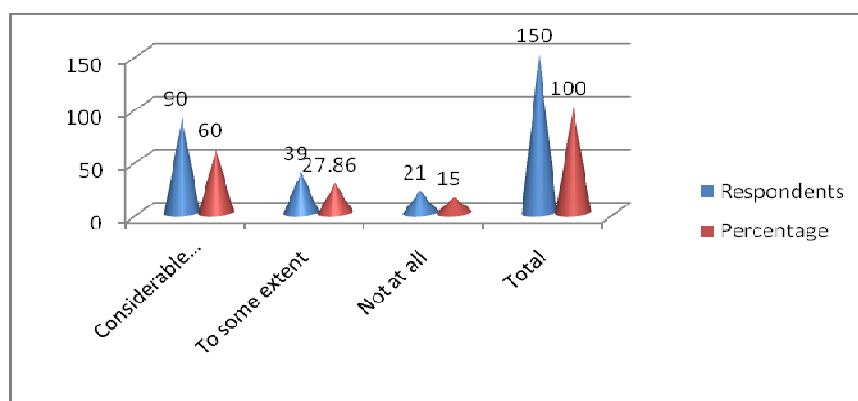| S. No	E – Resources	Respondents	Percentage
1	E – Journal	62	41.33
2	CD	09	6
3	Online Data Based	20	13.33
4	E – Books	09	6
5	OPAC	20	33.33
	Total	**150**	**100**

Figure 1: E-Information Resources Used by the Research Scholars

Table 6 display that the E-Information resources by research scholars in university of Periyar is E-Journal (41.33%) followed by OPAC (33.33%) E – Books and CD-ROM Data base is used only by 6% of Research Scholars.(13.33%) online Data based are used.

Table 7: Impact of E – Information in the Research Work

S. No	Degree of Change	Respondents	Percentage
1	Considerable change	90	60
2	To some extent	39	27.86
3	Not at all	21	15.00
	Total	**150**	**100**

Table 7 gives research scholars' response regarding the impact of e-information resources on their research work. Majority of research scholars 60 respondents that E-Information resources mode a considerable change in their research work, whereas, it is to some extent in the case of 27.86% of research scholars. Also 15% scholars responded that e – resources did to make any change in their research activity.

Figure 2: Impact of E – Information in the Research Work

Table 8: Barriers Faced by Research Scholar while Accessing E – resources

S. No	Types of Barriers	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Lack of speed	56	37. 33	37.33
2	Lack of relevant information	30	20	57.33
3	Information overload	45	30	87.33
4	Lack of IT Knowledge	19	12.66	99.99
	Total	**150**	**99.99**	**100**

There are a number of factors which hinder the effective use of various E – Information sources. Research scholars' responses regarding the barriers faced by them while accessing E – Information is given in Table 8

The main barrier faced by the research scholars while accessing the information is lack of speed (37.33%) followed by information overload (30.00%) and lack of relevant information (20.00%). More than 1/5th of the research scholars feel lack of IT knowledge as their main barrier in accessing the information from e-resources. Information overload emerged as a big problem to the research scholars. Hence proper training should be given to them so that they can be able to filter the relevant information from the huge digital resources.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Following findings are derived from scholars of science in Periyar University

- Majority of the male respondents use E – Information than females.

- 40.66 Per cent of respondents belong to20-25 age category use E – Information mostly.

- More than half of the respondents use University Central Library daily.

- 50.60% of the respondents' uses of e-resources are satisfied.

- Majority of the respondents' use various e-resources of Journal and OPAC.

- Main purpose of using E – Information resources by the research scholars in the University of Periyar is for their research work.

- Majority of research scholars responded that E – Information resource make a considerable change in their research work.

- The main problem faced by the research scholars while accessing the information from e-resource is lack of speed followed by information overload and lack of relevant information problems of information overload.

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the scholars of science in Periyar University use E – Information for Research work. It reveals that there is an increased acceptance of electronic journals by the university research scholars and e-resources have to play a vital significant role to assist academic and research community. Almost all the scholars are very satisfied with the quantities and quality of E – Information. Major problems encountered by the users towards access to e-consortium are lack of speed and information overload. The authorities have to intensify their awareness campaigns as well as orientation programs so that the problems encountered most is resolved according to researchers requirements.

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